Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

National Work Group on Acceleration
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National Work Group on Acceleration

To State Departments of Education and School District Educators:

Acceleration is one of the most effective and research-based interventions for the academic growth of students who are ready for an advanced or faster-paced curriculum. The Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA), the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), and the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted (CSDPG) collaboratively present guidelines for developing an academic acceleration policy.

The members of the National Work Group on Acceleration provide this document to assist schools in writing and modifying an acceleration policy that is suited to local needs and adheres to research-based best practices. This document can serve as a stand-alone guide or as a companion to existing state and local policies. The goal of the National Work Group on Acceleration is that these guidelines for policy development will encourage the systematic adoption and practice of acceleration in schools across the nation.

The overwhelming research evidence in favor of acceleration makes the intervention a highly valued option for all schools. The evidence is compelling that for highly motivated gifted students acceleration must be an option; therefore, all schools need to have written policies that allow the possibility of the various forms of acceleration as an academic intervention for carefully selected high ability students.

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Letter from Nancy Green

Letter from Rosanne Malek

Overview of Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

Although this document has over 50 pages, the heart of it is pages 1-11, which provide definitions of acceleration options, a summary of the research support for acceleration, and, importantly, a listing of the desirable elements of an acceleration policy. The guidelines presented on pages 1-11 are summarized in a checklist (pp. 12-13). The checklist can be used to make sure that a district's acceleration policy contains all the desirable elements.

Although educators can be well served by consulting only the first thirteen pages of this document, we provide extensive information and support in the appendices.

Appendix A: Definitions of acceleration interventions (p. 21) provides complete definitions of the categories, forms, and types of acceleration.

Appendix B: Survey of state acceleration policies (p. 24) summarizes the results of a recent survey from NAGC and CSDPG about acceleration policies and practices.

Appendix C: Suggested guidelines for implementing acceleration (p. 26) provides educators with guidelines for practicing acceleration. The suggestions we offer for implementing acceleration are based on the *Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd edition)* (Assouline et al., 2009). We discuss the three broad areas of implement acceleration: referral and screening, assessment and decision making, and planning.

Appendix D: Example language from state acceleration policies (p. 30) represents half of the text in this entire document. Appendix D gives examples of actual language from state acceleration policies, state gifted policies that specifically mention acceleration, and state regulatory language. We attempted to provide representative language for as many elements of the policy guidelines as possible so that educators and policymakers can see what language is used by other states. These examples are not necessary the "best" policy examples or guidelines; rather, they are examples of how other states regulate or legislate aspects of acceleration

Appendix E: Example referral forms from the Ohio Department of Education (p. 56) offers Ohio's acceleration referral forms as one example of forms that educators may wish to develop to implement acceleration in their district.

Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

Prepared by the
National Work Group on Acceleration

Introduction

High ability students have unique academic, cognitive, and social needs. Many bright students need more academic challenge than they are receiving in their education, and they need more opportunities to develop their talent. Yet, many states and school districts have no formal policies that address either the desirability of acceleration or procedures to be followed in making decisions about acceleration for particular students (see Appendix B: Survey of state acceleration policies). Absence of a formal policy might invite inconsistent practices that could even discourage acceleration, as is the case when early entrance to kindergarten, early high school graduation, or whole-grade acceleration are explicitly prohibited. The existence of an acceleration policy helps to ensure that students have their academic needs addressed.

Academic acceleration is an empirically validated educational intervention for high-ability students (Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004). The research consistently demonstrates the academic benefits to students and allows the conclusion that students are not negatively affected in the social-emotional domains. (See Research Support for Acceleration, p. 10).

An acceleration policy is a means to guide individual districts in implementing acceleration practices. A policy must promote awareness and adoption of sound accelerative practices. The research-based guidelines for developing an academic acceleration policy proposed here can serve as a concrete tool to guide policy makers, school administrators, and educators to create or modify policies at the state and/or school district levels.

Many schools have policies relating to gifted education that specify how to identify and serve gifted students and how to evaluate gifted education programs. However, gifted education policies don't necessarily specify how to identify and serve students for acceleration; in fact, some policies inadvertently endorse an enrichment approach to serving gifted students and thus acceleration is not presented as an option. An acceleration policy and recommendations for acceleration are not intended to take the place of enrichment opportunities. Some students will be served best by enrichment, some by acceleration, and some by a mix of the two (Neihart, 2007; Rogers, 2007; Schiever & Maker, 2003).

An acceleration policy can serve as a stand-alone policy or it can be incorporated into the elements of the existing gifted education policy. *However, the policy should clearly state that participation in a school's gifted program is **not** a prerequisite for consideration of acceleration as an educational intervention.* Some schools may not have a gifted and talented program. It is also possible that a student might not qualify

for a school's gifted and talented program because he or she did not obtain a qualifying composite score. Students with an uneven profile of achievement scores (significantly advanced in one area but not others) are not likely to obtain a qualifying composite score but may be served well by content acceleration in their area(s) of strength.

Categories, Forms, and Types of Acceleration

Acceleration is a broad term that encompasses many accelerative options. To help organize these options and encourage a common vocabulary for discussing them, we have classified the accelerative options into categories, forms, and types. (A comprehensive list of accelerative options is in Appendix A: Definitions of acceleration interventions.)

Definitions of categories, forms, and types. Categories are the broadest and most encompassing level of classification. The two broad *categories* of acceleration are content-based and grade-based (Colangelo et al., 2004; Rogers, 2004). The primary distinguishing feature between content-based acceleration and grade-based acceleration is whether the accelerative intervention shortens the number of years that a student spends in the K-12 system.

Content-based acceleration provides students with advanced content, skills, or understandings before the expected age or grade level (Southern & Jones, 2004). Students typically remain with peers of the same age and grade. Content-based acceleration can also refer to allowing a student to work on higher grade-level instruction in their regular classrooms in lieu of grade-level instruction.

Grade-based acceleration typically shortens the number of years a student spends in the K-12 system. In practice, a student is placed in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age on a full-time basis for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Grade-based acceleration is commonly known as "grade skipping," but it can include other means to shorten the number of years a student remains in the K-12 school system (Rogers, 2004; Southern & Jones, 2004). The exception is early entrance to kindergarten, which does not shorten the number of years the student spends in the K-12 system but shortens the wait time to start school.

The *categories* of acceleration have specific *forms*, or ways of varying the level, pace, and complexity of the curriculum. For example, single-subject acceleration, dual enrollment, and Advanced Placement coursework are all *forms* of content-based acceleration. Whole-grade acceleration and early entrance to school are *forms* of grade-based acceleration.

Some *forms* of acceleration have an additional level of specification, which is the *type. Types* are specific variations of practicing a particular form of acceleration. For example, single-subject acceleration (*form*) can be implemented by providing advanced content to an elementary student in a middle school or high school classroom (*types*).

Examples of the forms (and types) of content-based acceleration. The *forms* of content-based acceleration include single-subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, dual enrollment, credit by examination or prior experience, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, and talent search programs.

<u>Single-subject acceleration</u>
Single-subject acceleration includes many *types*, which include:

• A third grade student performing above grade level in reading and math goes to a fourth grade teacher every morning for instruction in these subjects and returns to the third grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.

• A musically gifted sixth grade student is enrolled in a high school instrumental music course and returns to the sixth grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.

• A group of fifth grade students performing above grade level in math is transported to a junior high building every morning for a seventh grade pre-algebra class. The students are transported back to the elementary school building for instruction with their fifth grade classmates for the remainder of the day.

Curriculum compacting
A student is pre-assessed to determine whether grade level proficiency in a specific academic area has been achieved. With the time bought, the student then engages in advanced content and skills development in that "compacted" or another area.

Dual enrollment
The school system allows advanced students to enroll in higher level coursework when proficiency at grade level has been demonstrated. For example, the middle school student takes a high school math course, or the advanced high school history student takes a university history course during the school day.

Credit by examination or prior experience
A student's instruction entails reduced amounts of introductory activities, drill, and practice, based on pre-assessment of the student's mastery of the intended curricular standards. The school allows an advanced student to demonstrate proficiency in a course or year of curriculum in an academic area based on an end-of-unit or end-of-year test or by reviewing the student's portfolio of work in the academic area. The student is then allowed to pursue more advanced coursework in that area.

Advanced Placement course work
Advanced Placement courses are provided, as early as the middle school years, for which the advanced student may enroll and take the AP exams, gaining high school and possible advanced university standing based on the examination score.

International Baccalaureate program
Advanced students may participate in the International Baccalaureate program, taking the corresponding university-level curricula. At the end of high school, the students complete an international examination, receiving advanced standing and course credits upon matriculation to university.

Examples of the forms (and types) of grade-based acceleration. The *forms* of grade-based acceleration include early entrance to school, whole-grade acceleration ("grade skipping"), grade telescoping, and early entrance to college.

Early entrance to school

The main *type* of early entrance to school is early entrance to kindergarten. However, in some districts, it is possible for students to skip kindergarten and enter first grade at a younger than typical age.

• A child who can read independently and is socially similar to typical five-year-olds is admitted to kindergarten, even though the child's fifth birthday won't be until the end of the school year. This intervention shortens the waiting time for a student to start school, and in this regard is a similar form of acceleration to early entrance to college.

Whole-grade acceleration

• One *type* of whole-grade acceleration occurs when a first grader, who has completed first grade, is placed in a third grade classroom (rather than a second grade classroom) on a full-time basis at the beginning of the next school year.

• Another *type* occurs when a fifth grade student completes the fall semester and is placed in the sixth grade at the start of the second semester of the same school year.

Grade telescoping

A group of advanced students is accelerated through more than one year's curriculum in a year in all academic areas, such that three years' curriculum are completed in two years' time, or if at high school, four years are completed in three years' time. The student fulfills credit requirements and graduates early.

Early entrance to college

There are multiple ways that students can enter college early. These *types* of early entrance to college include, but are not limited to:

• An advanced student is granted a diploma after spending only five semesters in high school by accumulating credits on an accelerated basis through "dual credit" coursework taken while in middle school and by satisfying some high school graduation requirements by completing "educational options" rather than traditional courses. The student then enrolls in college as a full-time student at age 16. Some students skip middle school and, after finishing high school, enter college at a younger than typical age.

• An advanced student leaves high school without the traditional diploma, entering a full-time university degree program.

Research Support for Acceleration

As an educational intervention, acceleration is decidedly effective for high ability students. The research support for acceleration that has accumulated over many decades is robust and consistent. The research allows us to confidently state that carefully planned acceleration decisions are successful.

Both grade-based and content-based acceleration are effective interventions in academic and social-emotional domains for high-ability students. Grade-accelerated students generally out-perform their chronologically older classmates academically, and both groups show approximately equal levels of social and emotional adjustment (cf., Assouline et al., 2003; Colangelo et al., 2004; Kulik, 2004; Kulik & Kulik, 1992; Lipscomb, 2003; Sayler & Brookshire, 1993; Southern & Jones, 1991). To be clear, there is no evidence that acceleration has a negative effect on a student's social-emotional development.

Some educators are reluctant to accelerate a student because they are concerned about long-term outcomes. However, longitudinal research has demonstrated that accelerants attain advanced degrees, produce scholarly works, and contribute professionally at rates well above societal baselines (Lubinski et al., 2001, 2006). In follow-up interviews, the students indicated they wished they would have had more acceleration opportunities while in the K-12 setting (Lubinski et al., 2001, 2006).

The review of acceleration research presented in *A Nation Deceived* (Colangelo et al., 2004) provides the necessary supporting evidence for our recommendations for developing an acceleration policy. For more information about acceleration research, visit IRPA's Website at http://www.accelerationinstitute.org.

Desirable Elements of an Acceleration Policy

Introduction. Each school district should have a written acceleration policy stating that acceleration is an appropriate and effective intervention for select highly able students who have demonstrated high performance in one or more academic areas. In this section, we offer some desirable elements of an acceleration policy that can help schools develop a comprehensive, consistent, and research-based policy.

The National Work Group on Acceleration recognizes that inconsistencies may exist between the guidelines we offer for acceleration policy development and existing state or local policies. One salient example is early entrance to kindergarten. The National Work Group on Acceleration suggests that highly able young children be considered for referral for early admission to kindergarten. Yet, 12 states (and many local districts) have policies that do not permit this form of acceleration. We recommend that these discrepancies be addressed in conversations between the relevant stakeholders, keeping in mind the best interests of the child and the research evidence. Education policies are malleable, and policy makers should be open to the dynamic evolution of policies to best serve students.

Desirable elements of an acceleration policy.
This section provides guidelines for components of an acceleration policy. For recommendations on how to implement acceleration, refer to Appendix C: Suggested Guidelines for Implementing Acceleration. For examples of policy language from current state policies, see Appendix D: Example Language from State Acceleration Policies.

The policy is characterized by accessibility, equity, and openness. Specific desirable elements of a policy to meet accessibility, equity, and openness criteria include the following:

Access to referral for consideration of acceleration is open to all students. A policy should not disproportionally limit access to referral for consideration of accelerative curricular modification based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, or school building attended. The policy shall be applied equitably and systematically to students referred for acceleration.

All student populations are served. The acceleration policy will be comprehensive in addressing acceleration for all grades K-12 and all students who demonstrate advanced academic ability in one or more content areas, including students who are English language learners (ELL), at-risk, of low socio-economic status, profoundly gifted, and/or twice exceptional. Profoundly gifted students are those whose ability scores place them at the 99.9^{th} percentile. Because these students are so rare (1 in 1,000), they require special attention when discussing appropriate educational interventions. Twice-exceptional students are those who are gifted and who have a cognitive, social, or behavioral disability; they, too, require special attention.

ELL enrollment in the United States has grown by 57 percent over the past 13 years, compared with less than 4 percent for all other student populations (National Education Association, 2009). ELLs account for 10 percent of the total student population,

representing more than 5 million students. There are students within this linguistically and culturally diverse group who have advanced academic achievement and cognitive abilities that exceed those of grade and age peers. Academic acceleration should be a highly valued program option for the schools these students attend.

Student evaluation is fair, objective, and systematic. A fair, objective, and systematic evaluation of the student should be conducted using the appropriate instruments for the form of acceleration being considered. When evaluating English language learners, appropriate instruments should include those in the student's heritage language.

Parents or guardians are allowed open communication about the policy and procedures. Written consent from parents or legal guardian(s) in order to evaluate the referred student for possible acceleration placement is required. All students who have been referred, and for whom consent has been obtained, will receive an evaluation from professionals in the district. Parents or legal guardians will be informed of the evaluation results in a timely manner (within 10 days recommended). A comprehensive written plan for the acceleration of recommended students should be developed. A written copy of the acceleration plan should be provided for the parents and legal guardian(s) of the student.

The community has ready access to the policy document and procedure guidelines. Community access includes making the policy available in the language(s) served by the school. The acceleration policy and procedures must be easily accessible to the community. The acceleration policy and referral forms should be available upon request in the language(s) served by the school. Parents should receive this information in writing and in their heritage language. The administration and school staff should be informed on an annual basis to assist the parents and students about the referral process.

The policy provides guidelines for the practice of acceleration. Specific desirable elements of a policy that provides guidelines for the practice of acceleration include:

Both categories of acceleration are specified. The two *categories* of acceleration, grade-based and content-based, their specific *forms* (e.g., telescoping, curriculum compacting), and *types* (when appropriate) need to be part of a school's acceleration policy. (See Appendix A for definitions of the categories, forms, and types of acceleration.)

The omission of guidelines for content-based acceleration in elementary and middle schools is notable. Many states have guidelines relating to Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrollment, or other forms of acceleration at the secondary level, but these guidelines often lack uniformity and consistency in the opportunities offered to students and ignore the concept of curriculum articulation (i.e., the necessary pre-requisite coursework to enroll in AP courses). Some guidelines have unreasonable age or grade requirements (such as not allowing students in 10th grade or below to enroll in AP courses).

The process of acceleration is detailed in the policy. The implementation of acceleration includes referral and screening, assessment and decision making, and planning. (See Appendix C: Suggested guidelines for implementing acceleration.)

Acceleration decisions should be made by child study teams, not individuals. An acceleration policy should be informed by research-based best practices, not personal opinions or anecdotal evidence. A common impediment to acceleration occurs when acceleration decisions are made by one person, a gatekeeper, who may harbor negative personal views about acceleration (Southern & Jones, 2004). A child study team- which should include experts in gifted education- should consider individual acceleration cases, and, with the use of valid and reliable instruments to guide the discussion, decide on the form of acceleration needed. The child study team should appoint a staff member of the school to oversee and aid in the implementation of the written acceleration plan and the transition process.

The policy provides guidelines on administrative matters to ensure fair and systematic use of accelerative opportunities and recognition for participation in those accelerative opportunities. Specific desirable elements of a policy that provides guidelines on administrative matters include the following:

Short-term needs are addressed. An acceleration policy should provide guidance for issues in the short term, which include, but are not limited to:

• identifying how the student's transition will be monitored and by whom, and
• specifying which grade level state achievement test the student should take.

Long-term needs are addressed. An acceleration policy should provide guidance for issues in the long term, which include, but are not limited to:

• providing guidance throughout K-12 to make sure that students will be allowed to maintain their accelerated standing,
• working with the district to discuss distance learning options and/or flexible transportation arrangements should a student need to travel between buildings,
• indicating accelerated coursework on a student's transcript, and
• determining the student's class rank.

The district should retain a copy of the student's written acceleration plan to help assure that future opportunities specified in the plan are provided and that the student does not run into obstacles in subsequent years of school (such as when a student who is accelerated by continuous progress requires curriculum from two different schools).

The process of awarding credit to students is specified. To serve middle school and high school students who show advanced academic ability relative to age and grade peers, the school should implement procedures for awarding units of credit and grades based on a demonstration of subject area competency instead of, or in combination

with, completing hours of classroom instruction. Alternative credit pathways should include, but are not limited to:

a. “Testing out” of a course or part of a course by attaining an established minimum score on an approved assessment instrument;

b. Demonstrating prior mastery through the presentation of a portfolio of relevant student work;

c. Successfully completing a program of independent study based on an approved learning contract;

d. Successfully completing a flexibly paced distance learning program addressing content comparable to the traditional course.

The policy provides guidelines for preventing non-academic barriers to the use of acceleration as an educational intervention. Specific desirable elements of a policy that provides guidelines for preventing non-academic barriers to the use of acceleration include the following:

Extracurricular opportunities, especially interscholastic sports opportunities, should not be withheld or denied to students who are accelerated. For example, a middle school student who receives high school credit should not have any reduction of sports eligibility. We recommend that a conversation be initiated between gifted education experts in the area of acceleration and the governing board for interscholastic activities to review the impact of the current rules and policies on students participating in subject acceleration.

Use of acceleration should not negatively affect school funding. The appropriate agency should review school funding formulae to identify any unintended disincentives to appropriate use of academic acceleration and provide a report and recommendations for changes necessary to ensure that schools and districts are held harmless with respect to state funding when students enter kindergarten or first grade or graduate from high school at an earlier than typical age in accordance with an approved acceleration policy.

The policy proactively works to prevent unintended consequences. Specific desirable elements of a policy that proactively works to prevent unintended consequences include the following:

An appeal process should be specified for decisions made at any step during the process. An appeal process, including procedures for appealing and the time limitations on starting an appeal, should be specified.

If a student is recommended for accelerated placement, the child study team should establish an appropriate transition period. (We recommend that the student's transition be evaluated no later than 30 days after the placement, and sooner if there are concerns about the placement.)

Within the time specified for the transition period, the parent or legal guardian may request in writing an alternative placement. The administrator should bring such proposals before the decision-making team who will be responsible for issuing a decision within a specified number of days (we recommend a decision within 10 days) of receiving the request. If the acceleration plan is modified, the written acceleration plan should be updated.

During this time, the parent or legal guardian(s) may request, in writing, the discontinuation of the acceleration program without any repercussions.

The relevant organization should evaluate the policy for its effectiveness. The policy should include recommendations for how to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy itself and its effectiveness in successfully accelerating students. The policy should provide recommendations for the point at which the policy's effectiveness is evaluated (for example, a committee should be convened once a year to review success of the policy as well as unintentional barriers to the use of acceleration).

One factor in the evaluation of the policy might include an assessment of the accelerated student's *academic performance.* Research demonstrates that whole-grade accelerated students typically score above the mean, and often score well above the mean, in the accelerated grade level, meaning that the accelerated student is outperforming older peers (Assouline et al., 2003; Wells, Lohman, & Marron, 2009). The expectation for the student's long-term academic success is discussed by Assouline, et al. (2009):

> "Accelerated students should be expected to achieve, relative to their new grade peers, at a high level that is generally comparable to their performance in the previous grade. Such students are typically among the top 10% in a class, and they should be expected to remain in the top 10% throughout their academic careers. The difference, following acceleration, is that these students will likely find it more a challenge to attain a similar level of excellence." (p. 5)

A second factor in the evaluation should include the student's *social and behavioral adjustment*. Acceleration may attenuate social and behavioral issues for some students, but acceleration is not a panacea. Acceleration should either have a positive impact on social and behavioral adjustment or maintain the student's same level of (appropriate) social and behavioral adjustment. Acceleration should not negatively impact social and behavioral adjustment. Receiving teachers should help identify likely peers for the

incoming student, and counselors should provide support in study skills and social coping when necessary.

A third factor to consider is the *dosage of acceleration*: does the accelerated setting provide enough academic challenge for students? A few students may need an additional year of acceleration. Some students will need content acceleration to provide curriculum beyond what is offered in the accelerated setting. Therefore, if the level of acceleration is not sufficient, the policy needs to allow for the consideration of additional acceleration.

Caveats and future directions

To encourage the appropriate use of acceleration and to provide support for sound policy development, the National Work Group on Acceleration recommends comprehensive studies of other state and local policies to identify unintended barriers to appropriate use of acceleration.

For example, some states and local education agencies have absolute age requirements for entering school. Others have curriculum requirements tied to specific grade levels, or prerequisites for certain courses/programs that are so specific in policy that they tie educators' hands. Additionally, colleges and universities may present barriers by arbitrarily limiting participation of accelerated students in dual enrollment programs. For example, in Ohio, students aren't allowed to take the state graduation test until the spring of the sophomore year. Some Ohio colleges and universities require students to have passed the graduation test before enrolling in their dual enrollment programs. In effect, this locks students out of college-level courses until their junior year.

The goal of the National Work Group on Acceleration is that these Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy will encourage the systematic adoption and practice of acceleration in schools across the nation. IRPA provides free consultation to educators and school districts on using these guidelines or adapting them to fit within local constraints.

Checklist for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

An ideal acceleration policy will have a "yes" answer to each question.

Is your acceleration policy characterized by accessibility, equity, and openness?			
Is access to referral for consideration of acceleration open to all students regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, and school building attended?	Yes	No	Not sure
Are all student populations served, including ELL, at-risk, low socioeconomic status, profoundly gifted, and twice exceptional?	Yes	No	Not sure
Is the process of student evaluation fair, objective, and systematic?	Yes	No	Not sure
Do parents or legal guardians have open communication with school officials about the policy document?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does the community have access to the policy document? Is the policy accessible in the languages served by the school?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does your acceleration policy provide guidelines for the practice of acceleration?			
Are both categories of acceleration (grade-based and content-based) specified?	Yes	No	Not sure
Are the forms of acceleration (e.g., early admission to school, telescoping, Advanced Placement) specified?	Yes	No	Not sure
Is the process of acceleration detailed (including referral & screening, assessment & decision making, and planning)?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does the policy specify that child study teams, not individuals, consider acceleration cases?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does your acceleration policy provide guidelines on administrative matters?			
Does the policy address short-term needs, such as… • who will monitor the acceleration? • which grade-level achievement test should the student take?	Yes Yes	No No	Not sure Not sure
Does the policy address long-term needs,			

such as… • maintaining accelerated standing? • clarifying transportation issues for students who need to travel between buildings? • assigning appropriate credit for accelerated coursework? • indicating acceleration coursework on a transcript?	Yes Yes Yes Yes	No No No No	Not sure Not sure Not sure Not sure
Specify the process of awarding course credit to students?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does your acceleration policy provide guidelines for preventing non-academic barriers?			
Are procedures in place to ensure participation in extracurricular activities, including sports?	Yes	No	Not sure
Have funding formulae been reviewed to prevent unintended disincentives?	Yes	No	Not sure
Does your acceleration policy prevent unintended consequences?			
Does the policy specify an appeal process?	Yes	No	Not sure
Are procedures for evaluating the policy effectiveness detailed?	Yes	No	Not sure

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Resources

Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration (IRPA) at the University of Iowa's Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development, www.accelerationinstitute.org

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), www.nagc.org
For NAGC's position papers on acceleration, grouping, and many other topics, visit http://www.nagc.org/index2.aspx?id=375

Information on gifted education policies in each state is available from the NAGC website.

For more information about Advanced Placement classes, see the College Board's website.

T*he Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition.* Information about the *IAS* is available at www.accelerationinstitute.org and www.giftedbooks.com.

Additional readings

Assouline, S. G., & Lupkowski-Shoplik, A. E. (2005). *Developing math talent: A guide for educating gifted and advanced learners in math.* Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

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Overview of the Appendices A-E in Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

Appendix A: Definitions of acceleration interventions (p. 21) provides complete definitions of the categories, forms, and types of acceleration.

Appendix B: Survey of state acceleration policies (p. 24) summarizes the results of a recent survey from NAGC and CSDPG about acceleration policies and practices.

Appendix C: Suggested guidelines for implementing acceleration (p. 26) provides educators with guidelines for practicing acceleration. The suggestions we offer for implementing acceleration are based on the *Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd edition)* (Assouline et al., 2009). We discuss the three broad areas of implement acceleration: referral and screening, assessment and decision making, and planning.

Appendix D: Example language from state acceleration policies (p. 30) represents half of the text in this entire document. Appendix D gives examples of actual language from state acceleration policies, state gifted policies that specifically mention acceleration, and state regulatory language. We attempted to provide representative language for as many elements of the policy guidelines as possible so that educators and policymakers can see what language is used by other states. These examples are not necessary the "best" policy examples or guidelines; rather, they are examples of how other states regulate or legislate aspects of acceleration

Appendix E: Example referral forms from the Ohio Department of Education (p. 56) offers Ohio's acceleration referral forms as one example of forms that educators may wish to develop to implement acceleration in their district.

Appendix A: Definitions of acceleration interventions

Adapted from Southern, W. T., & Jones, E. D. (2004). Types of acceleration: Dimensions and issues. In N. Colangelo, S. Assouline, & M. U. M. Gross (Eds.), *A nation deceived: How schools hold back America's brightest students* (Vol. 2, pp. 5-12). Iowa City, IA: The University of Iowa, The Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development.

Category 1: Content-based acceleration provides students with advanced content, skills, or understandings before the expected age or grade level (Southern & Jones, 2004). Students typically remain with peers of the same age and grade. Content-based acceleration can also refer to allowing a student to work on higher grade level instruction in their regular classrooms in lieu of grade level instruction.

Forms of content-based acceleration
Single-subject acceleration
Curriculum compacting
Concurrent/dual enrollment
Correspondence courses
Credit by examination or prior experience
Mentoring
Extracurricular programs
Advanced Placement
International Baccalaureate

Category 2: Grade-based acceleration typically shortens the number of years a student spends in the K-12 system. In practice, a student is placed on a full-time basis in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Grade-based acceleration is commonly known as "grade skipping," but it can include other means to shorten the number of years a student remains in the K-12 school system (Rogers, 2004; Southern & Jones, 2004). The exception is early entrance to kindergarten, which does not shorten the number of years the student spends in the K-12 system but shortens the wait time to start school.

Forms of grade-based acceleration
Early admission to school
(Types of early admission to school: Early admission to kindergarten & Early admission to first grade)
Whole-grade acceleration
Continuous progress
Self-paced instruction
Telescoping curriculum
Combined classes

Early entrance into middle school, high school, or college
Early graduation
Acceleration in college

Definitions and examples of the *forms* (and *types*) of content-based acceleration

Single-subject acceleration
This practice allows students to be placed in classes with older peers for a part of the day (or with materials from higher grade placements) in one or more content areas. Subject-matter acceleration or partial acceleration may be accomplished by the student either physically moving to a higher-level class for instruction (e.g., a second-grade student going to a fifth-grade reading group), or using higher-level curricular or study materials. Subject-matter acceleration may also be accomplished outside of the general instructional schedule (e.g., summer school or after school) or by using higher-level instructional activities on a continuous progress basis without leaving the placement with chronological-age peers.

Curriculum compacting
The student's instruction entails reduced amounts of introductory activities, drill, and practice. Instructional experiences may also be based on relatively fewer instructional objectives compared to the general curriculum. The time gained may be used for more advanced content instruction or to participate in enrichment activities. Instructional goals should be selected on the basis of careful analyses for their roles in the content and hierarchies of curricula. The parsing of activities and goals should be based on pre-instructional assessment (such as using a unit test as a pre-test).

Concurrent/dual enrollment
The student takes a course at one level and receives credit for a parallel course at a higher level (e.g., taking algebra at the middle school level and receiving credit at both the middle school and the high school level or taking a high school chemistry course that is of college-level difficulty and receiving credit for a university course upon successful completion).

Correspondence courses
The student enrolls in coursework delivered outside of normal school instruction. Instruction may be delivered traditionally by mail, but increasingly other delivery mechanisms such as Internet-based instruction and televised courses are used.

Credit by examination or prior experience
The student is awarded advanced standing credit (e.g., in high school or college) by successfully completing some form of mastery test or activity.

Mentoring
A student is paired with a mentor or expert tutor who provides advanced or more rapid pacing of instruction.

Extracurricular programs
Students elect to enroll in coursework or after school or summer programs that confer advanced instruction and/or credit.

Advanced Placement
The student takes a course (traditionally in high school) that will confer college credit upon successful completion of a standardized examination.

International Baccalaureate
Advanced students may participate in the International Baccalaureate program, taking the corresponding university-level curricula. At the end of high school, the students complete an international examination, receiving advanced standing and course credits upon matriculation to university.

Definitions and examples of the *forms* (and *types*) of grade-based acceleration

Early admission to school
Early admission to kindergarten: Students enter kindergarten prior to achieving the minimum age for school entry as set by district or state policy. The entry age specified varies greatly throughout the country and is generally stated in terms of birth date (for example, "entry to kindergarten will be allowed for prospective students who will achieve the age of five years on or before September 30 of their entry year").
Early admission to first grade: This practice can result from either the skipping of kindergarten, or from accelerating a student enrolled in kindergarten into first grade.

Whole-grade acceleration
A student is considered to have been whole-grade accelerated ("grade skipped") if he or she is given a grade-level placement ahead of chronological-age peers. Whole-grade acceleration may be done at the beginning of or during the school year.

Continuous progress
The student is given content progressively as prior content is completed and mastered. The practice is accelerative when the student's progress exceeds the performance of chronological peers in rate and level. Provision for providing sequenced materials may or may not be with the discretion of the teacher or within the control of the student.

Self-paced instruction
With this option the student proceeds through learning and instructional activities at a self-selected pace. Self-paced instruction is a sub-type of continuous progress acceleration. Self-paced instruction is distinguishable from the more general continuous progress in that the student has control over all pacing decisions.

Telescoping curriculum

Student is provided instruction that entails less time than is normal (e. g., completing a one year course in one semester, or three years of middle school in two). Telescoping differs from curriculum compacting in that time saved from telescoping always results in advanced grade placement. It is planned to fit a precise time schedule. Curriculum compacting, on the other hand, does not necessarily advance grade placement.

Combined classes
While not, in and of itself, a practice designed for acceleration, in some instances (e.g., a fourth and fifth-grade split room), this placement can allow younger students to interact academically and socially with older peers. It may or may not result in an advanced grade placement later.

Early graduation
The student graduates from high school or college in three-and-a-half years or less. Generally, this is accomplished by increasing the amount of coursework undertaken each year in high school or college, but it may also be accomplished through dual/ concurrent enrollment or extracurricular and correspondence coursework.

Early entrance into middle school, high school, or college
The student is awarded an advanced level of instruction at least one year ahead of normal. This may be achieved with the employment of other accelerative techniques such as dual enrollment and credit by examination or by determination of college teachers and administrators.

Acceleration in college
The student completes two or more majors in a total of four years and/or earns an advanced degree along with or in lieu of a bachelors degree.

Appendix B: Survey of state acceleration policies

A recent national survey, *State of the States in Gifted Education 2006-2007* (NAGC & CSDPG) quantifies the prevalence of acceleration policies and practices. The survey results indicate that acceleration policies are infrequent at the state level and highly variable at the district level.

Much policy work remains to be done in making sure that policies exist to serve those students who should be accelerated but for various reasons are not. The existence of a state or local policy does not necessarily mean that the policy is based on research or favorable toward acceleration.

The results of the NAGC/CSDPG nationwide survey are summarized in the following table. Policies specific to each state are included in comprehensive tables in the *State of the States* report.

*{Note to committee members: The formatting of this table is not preserved from the State of the States publication, and so the column headers do not line up correctly. The numbers in the cells are correct**. Can NAGC provide a copy of the table?}***

State Policy Permits	State Policy Does Not Permit		State Policy Leaves to LEA to Determine	No State Policy; Up to LEA to Determine
Acceleration Policy	11	0	7	25
Early Entrance to Kindergarten	9	12	8	14
Alternate High School Diploma	0	26	1	16
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment in Community College, College or University	31	0	7	5
High School Credit for Courses Completed at a Community College, College or University	29	0	10	9
Middle School Students Permitted Dual/Concurrent Enrollment in High School	9	5	12	17
Middle School Students Receive Credit Toward High School Graduation for Dual/Concurrent Courses	15	2	13	7
Proficiency-Based Promotions for Gifted & Talented Students	13	8	10	11
State Allows Credit Toward High School for Demonstrated Proficiency	11	2	11	8

From *State of the States in Gifted Education 2006-2007*, p.41
NAGC & CSDPG (2007)

As the numbers in the table indicate, only 11 states have a policy that allows acceleration; 7 states have a policy that formally relegates the decision to local education agencies (LEAs); 25 states have no policy, thus leaving any decisions about acceleration to LEAs by default; and 7 states did not respond to the survey.

Even among the 11 states that explicitly allow acceleration, the forms of acceleration are not uniformly embraced. For example, four of these states do not allow early entrance to kindergarten, two states leave the decisions to LEAs, and five states do allow early entrance to kindergarten.

Early entrance to kindergarten as an acceleration option is infrequently supported by policy recommendations at the state level. Only nine states allow early entrance to kindergarten, 12 states prohibit it, and LEAs make the decisions in 22 states. Even when a policy exists at the district level that allows early entrance, the entry requirements can be so unreasonable that students effectively are ineligible (see Southern and Jones' 2004 study of acceleration policies in Ohio school districts for examples of some of the requirements written into district policies).

Most extant policies concern grade-based acceleration (whole-grade acceleration, early entrance to kindergarten, or early entrance to college). Notably missing from most policies is a consideration of content-based acceleration for elementary and middle school students. Policies concerning the education of talented high school students make greater mention of content-acceleration, especially Advanced Placement coursework and concurrent/dual enrollment options. However, even these policies for secondary students vary on the age or grade at which a student can take a class and who is responsible (the school or the student) for fees of out-of-school courses.

In regard to state-level acceleration policies, only one state- Ohio- has both a legislative mandate requiring all districts to have an acceleration policy and a model policy (Model Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners) with research-based recommendations that districts can use to serve students. The Minnesota legislature, in 2007, required all school districts to adopt acceleration procedures that specify how students will be assessed for acceleration and how the curriculum will be modified to serve students identified for acceleration. Ohio and Minnesota are rare examples of statewide action in support of acceleration.

Appendix C: Suggested guidelines for implementing acceleration

The National Work Group on Acceleration recommends that an acceleration policy provide guidance on the practice of acceleration. The National Work Group on Acceleration supports the use of objective and comprehensive decision-making instruments. Decisions about accelerating an individual student need to be based on a thorough, team-based review of the factors relevant to acceleration.

In this appendix, we provide guidelines on implementing acceleration from the *Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd ed.)* (*IAS-3*; Assouline et al., 2009), a guide for making decisions about grade-based acceleration. Because the decision about acceleration is typically a local (and sometimes a controversial) decision, documents such as the *IAS* provide a tool for determining whether acceleration is likely to be appropriate for the student. The *IAS* requires a collection of information about the student that facilitates a meaningful discussion about the academic and social aspects of the student to help determine whether the student is likely to benefit from acceleration. Specific information is compiled about the student including academics and interpersonal relationships the student has developed, which then serves as a means for discussing the learning needs of the student. Use of the *IAS* or a similar tool ensures decisions based on specific information about the child as a learner rather than subjective opinions.

Many users of the *IAS-3* have offered that it is the most comprehensive and well-researched guide for implementing acceleration. As more instruments and decision-making guides are developed and validated, we will include them on IRPA's website (www.accelerationinstitute.org) and update this Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy document.

The *IAS-3* allows an appraisal of the factors that enter into determining if a K-8 student is a good candidate for grade-based acceleration. In addition to academic factors, the *IAS-3* helps a child study team review non-academic factors that are relevant to success with acceleration. These nonacademic factors include social-emotional maturity, family involvement in the student's schooling, and the student's school attendance history.

Two authors of the *IAS-3*-Nicholas Colangelo and Susan Assouline- are members of the National Work Group on Acceleration. No authors of the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* receive a royalty from the sale of the *IAS-3*. All authors have agreed that the royalties from the *Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition* will go to the Belin-Blank Center to support its services to schools.

The suggestions we offer for implementing acceleration come from or are largely influenced by the *IAS-3 Manual*. The desirable elements of an acceleration policy can be broken down into three broad areas: referral and screening, assessment and decision making, and planning. Implementation procedures shall not disproportionally limit access to accelerative curricular modification based on gender, race, ethnicity,

disability status (including twice exceptionality), socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, or school building attended.

Referral and screening

Referral for acceleration is a separate process from referral to a school's gifted program. Students who are referred for acceleration will not necessarily be part of a school's gifted and talented program because the school may not have a gifted and talented program, or the student may not qualify for the program if the school uses composite test scores for acceptance into a gifted program.

• Students who are should be considered for evaluation for academic acceleration can be referred to a school administrator by any source, including but not limited to the student, teachers, administrators, school psychologists, school counselors, parents, and other students. Referral should be open to many sources so that one person does not serve as the gatekeeper for referral recommendations.

• Students scoring at or above predetermined levels, such as the 95th percentile, on regularly administered state norm referenced tests should be automatically be referred for consideration for acceleration. The student's score profile, rather than the composite score should be considered, so as not to bias the procedure against students who have an uneven pattern of scores and who are likely candidates for subject matter acceleration.

• The screening procedure should be applied equitably and systematically to all referred students.

• If, after a clear explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of acceleration, the student expresses that he/she is not interested in acceleration, then the process should not proceed further. The possibility of consideration for referral for acceleration can be re-visited at a later date.

• Current recommendations are that students who are candidates for early entrance to kindergarten not be more than 3-6 months younger than the cut-off age (Gagne & Gagnier, 2004; Robinson & Weimer, 1991). Bright young children who are ready for more academic challenge but are not necessarily ready for success in a school system might consider alternative or non-traditional school settings. A pre-school teacher well-informed about gifted issues might be able to meet the needs of such a student. An assessment by a psychologist may provide useful strategies for the student and family. (Note: not all schools accept results from assessments by independent psychologists.)

• Ideally, a student will be assessed for acceleration in the spring, and, if recommended, participate in appropriate transition activities prior to placement in the advanced grade or content at the beginning of the next school year. The needs of the student should dictate when acceleration decisions are considered. Local practices should determine

how many days prior to the start of the school year or second semester an acceleration referral and evaluation should be made.

Assessment and decision making.

• School districts are expected to conduct a fair, objective, and systematic assessment of the student using the appropriate instruments for the type of acceleration being considered for the student. When assessing English language learners, appropriate instruments may include those in the student's heritage language.

If the district uses assessment instruments other than those recommended in the *IAS* (3rd ed.), care must be taken to insure that the instruments are valid and reliable, and that the instruments measure the factors related to success with acceleration.

• Inability to pay for any tests related to the evaluation, such as ability tests conducted by an independent psychologist, should not exclude families or students from consideration. Indeed, it is precisely because some students are at-risk of exclusion for consideration of acceleration, that an objective policy should be implemented.

• A child study team should consider cases of whole-grade acceleration and use valid and reliable instruments (such as the *IAS-3*) to guide the discussion and decide on placement. In an ideal child study team, at least one person is familiar with the research and best practices of gifted education and acceleration. A representative with expertise in language acquisition should be a team member to guide placement decisions when the student is an ELL. A representative with expertise in twice exceptionality should be a team member to guide placement decisions when the student is twice exceptional. The issue of assembling a child study team should not become a burden, nor should acceleration decisions be delayed if a team is unable to have all recommended members present, although a process for obtaining input from team members who cannot be present should be in place.

The school administrator should convene the team comprised of the following people, if possible, to discuss whole grade acceleration for a student.

Administrator
Receiving teacher(s)- the teacher(s) from the next grade
Current teacher
Talented and gifted teacher
School psychologist
School counselor
Parents or guardians
A representative with expertise in language acquisition when the student is an English language learner
A representative with expertise in twice exceptionality when the student is twice exceptional
Any other parties who may have knowledge beneficial to the decision making process.

As part of the information gathering stage, the student being considered for acceleration can be consulted, depending on the student's age and willingness to participate. (The student should not participate in the child study team's discussion of the student.)

• A child study team should be assembled also to consider cases of content-based acceleration. Because content-based acceleration does not involve a student's full-time placement with older classmates, there may be fewer concerns about social and emotional development. Because of the less extreme nature of content acceleration, the child study team need not be made up of as many members as the team assembled for discussions of whole-grade acceleration. Members of a child study team for content acceleration should include the current teacher of the content area, the receiving teacher for the content area, the parent, the students, and possibly others teachers and/or a school counselor to assist with initial adjustment issues.

Planning

A comprehensive written plan for the decision should be developed and be provided to the parents or legal guardian(s) of the student.

• The child study team should appoint a staff member of the school to oversee and aid in the implementation of the written acceleration plan and the transition process.
• The child study team should establish an appropriate transition period for the accelerated placement. We recommend that the student's transition be evaluated no later than 30 days after the placement, and sooner if necessary. During this time, the parent or legal guardian(s) may request, in writing, the discontinuation of the acceleration program without any repercussions.

• Within the time specified for the transition period, the parent or legal guardian may request an alternative placement in writing. The administrator should bring such proposals before the decision making team who will be responsible for issuing a decision within a specified number of days (we recommend ten days) of receiving the request. If the acceleration plan is modified, the written plan should be modified accordingly and a new transition period determined.

• The accelerated placement of the student should become permanent at the end of the transition period. Once the plan becomes permanent it should be entered into the student's permanent record.

Appendix D: Example language from state acceleration policies

In this appendix, we provide examples from state acceleration policies, state gifted policies that specifically mention one of the types of acceleration, and state regulatory language. Our examples are not exhaustive; for example, language from school district policies is not included because it is difficult to find district policies. We attempted to provide example language from an array of states, but we were limited by the existence of policies in only a few states. We attempted to provide representative language for as many elements of the policy guidelines as possible so that policymakers can see what language is used by other states. These examples are not necessary the "best" policy examples or guidelines; rather, they are examples of how other states regulate or legislate aspects of acceleration.

Sample Policy Language and Implementation Information from Ohio

Ohio has been a national leader in legislating and regulating acceleration at the state level. The Ohio State Board of Education adopted "A Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners." All districts were required beginning with the 2006-2007 school year to implement the model policy or a similar policy (subject to approval). Because Ohio has developed a comprehensive model policy and guidelines for implementing acceleration, we provide a link to their toolkit of materials as examples of how to write a policy and develop policy documents.

Information that can be accessed from the link includes the following:

- Testing Rules for Subject-Accelerated Students
- Acceleration Update
- Model policy text and introductory information
- Form for submitting district acceleration policies for review
- State Board of Education Resolution on Acceleration and the Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners
- Summary of an ODE-sponsored research study of Ohio school district policies and practices related to acceleration by W. Thomas Southern, Ph.D., and Eric Jones, Ph.D.
- Acceleration Case Studies
- An Introduction to the Iowa Acceleration Scale
- Model Written Acceleration Plans and Templates for whole-grade acceleration, subject acceleration in math, subject acceleration in science, and early high school graduation
- Frequently Asked Questions About Acceleration and Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners

Sample Policy Language About the Types of Acceleration

Early entrance to kindergarten.

Example 1: North Carolina

Policy Language:
“A child who has passed the fourth anniversary of the child's birth on or before April 16 may enter kindergarten if the child is presented for enrollment no later than the end of the first month of the school year and if the principal of the school finds, based on information submitted by the child's parent or guardian, that the child is gifted and that the child has the maturity to justify admission to the school. The State Board of Education shall establish guidelines for the principal to use in making this finding. (1955, c. 1372, art. 19, s. 2; 1969, c. 1213, s. 4; 1973, c. 603, s. 3; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1983, c. 656, s. 1; 1997‑204, s. 1; 1997‑269, s. 1; 2007‑173, s. 1.)”

The guidelines for early entrance to kindergarten are presented in the North Carolina State Board of Education Policy Manual, Policy Title 16 NCAC 6E.0105 Policy delineating the standards for early admission to kindergarten

.0105 EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN

(a) To determine the eligibility of a four-year-old child to enter kindergarten pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 115C-364(d), the principal shall confer with a committee of professional educators to consider for each child the following factors:

(1) Student Aptitude. The child shall be precocious in academic and social development and shall score at the 98th percentile on a standard individual test of intelligence such as the Stanford-Binet, The Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, the Kaufman Anderson, or any other comparable test administered by a licensed psychologist.

(2) Achievement. The child shall be functioning from two to three years beyond the child's peers. The child shall score at the 98th percentile on either reading or mathematics on a standard test of achievement such as the Metropolitan Readiness Test, the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, The Mini Battery of Achievement, the Woodcock-Johnson, the Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA), the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA), or any other comparable test administered by a licensed psychologist, a member of the psychologist's professional staff, or a professional educator who is trained in the use of the instrument and who has no conflict of interest in the outcome of the assessment.

(3) Performance. The child shall be able to perform tasks well above age peers as evidenced by behaviors in one or more areas such as independent reading, problem solving skills, advanced vocabulary, and some writing fluency. The parent shall submit a

sample of the child's work that shows outstanding examples of ability in any area including, but not limited to, art, mathematics, writing, dramatic play, creative productions, science, or social interactions. The principal may also require a teacher to complete an informal reading assessment of the child.

(4) Observable Student Behavior/Student Interest. The child shall demonstrate social and developmental maturity sufficient to participate in a structured setting for a full school day. The child shall be capable of following verbal instructions and functioning independently within a group. The parent shall provide two recommendation letters with specific documentation of physical and social maturity from preschool teachers, child care workers, pediatricians, or others who have direct knowledge of the child. Useful documentation checklists include the California Preschool Competency Scale, the Harrison Scale, or any other comparable scale of early social development.

(5) Motivation/Student Interest. The principal or principal's designee shall conduct an informal interview with the child and a more structured interview with the parent to determine if the child displays a thirst for knowledge and seeks new and challenging learning situations.

(b) The parent shall present the information required by this Rule to the principal within the first 30 calendar days of the school's instructional year. All testing shall be administered after the April 16th that follows the child's fourth birthday. The principal shall decide whether to grant the parent's request for enrollment within three weeks after receiving this information. The principal may conditionally enroll the child for up to ninety days in order to observe whether the child is able to adjust to the school setting. If the principal determines that the child has not adjusted to the school setting, the principal shall deny the request for enrollment. However, before the child is exited from school, the principal shall invite the parent to assist in the development of intervention strategies for the child. If those strategies are not successful, the principal shall provide the parent at least 10 days notice before exiting the child from school so the parent may arrange child care, if needed.

(c) LEAs may require parents to supply information in addition to that required by this Rule. LEAs may also require specific tests or other measures to provide information relating to the factors listed in Paragraph (a) of this Rule.

(d) Early admission to kindergarten shall not automatically result in the placement of the child in the program for academically gifted students. By the time the child has been enrolled for 90 calendar days, or at any earlier time that school officials determine that the child has adjusted satisfactorily and shall be allowed to remain in school, the gifted identification team shall review the child's information to determine if the child shall receive gifted services. If the team determines that the child shall receive gifted services, it shall develop either a differentiated education plan or an individual differentiated education plan for the child.

Citation: §115C 364. Admission requirements.
North Carolina State Board of Education Policy Manual, Policy Title 16 NCAC 6E.0105
Policy delineating the standards for early admission to kindergarten

Example 2: Maryland

(3) Kindergarten.

(a) By the 2006—2007 school year and thereafter, a child shall be 5 years old on or before September 1 of a school year to be age-eligible for admission during that school year to a kindergarten program approved under this chapter.

(b) A school may develop a plan to meet the September 1, 2006 kindergarten age-of-eligibility date requirement.

(c) A school may adopt policies and procedures permitting a 4-year-old child to be admitted to kindergarten, upon request by the parent or guardian, if the school determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission.
(13A.09.09.10 Administrative Practices, available at
http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/13a/13a.09.09.10.htm)

Example 3: Ohio

Policy Language:
No child shall be admitted to a kindergarten or a first grade of a public school in a district in which all children are admitted to kindergarten and the first grade in August or September unless the child is five or six years of age, respectively, by the thirtieth day of September of the year of admittance, or by the first day of a term or semester other than one beginning in August or September in school districts granting admittance at the beginning of such term or semester, except that in those school districts using or obtaining educationally accepted standardized testing programs for determining entrance, as approved by the board of education of such districts, the board shall admit a child to kindergarten or the first grade who fails to meet the age requirement, provided the child meets necessary standards as determined by such standardized testing programs. If the board of education has not established a standardized testing program, the board shall designate the necessary standards and a testing program it will accept for the purpose of admitting a child to kindergarten or first grade who fails to meet the age requirement. Each child who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be so tested upon the request of the child's parent.

Citation: ORC 3321.02
http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3321.01

Early entrance to first grade.

Example 1: Ohio
(C) Except as provided in division (D) of this section, no school district shall admit to the first grade any child who has not successfully completed kindergarten.
(D) Upon request of a parent, the requirement of division (C) of this section may be waived by the district's pupil personnel services committee in the case of a child who is at least six years of age by the thirtieth day of September of the year of admittance and who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the committee the possession of the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary for first grade.
Example 2: Kentucky
158.031 Primary school program -- Authority for administrative regulations -- Attributes -- Part time attendance -- Grouping -- Advancement -- Reporting requirements. (6) A school district may advance a student through the primary program when it is determined that it is in the best educational interest of the student. A student who is at least five (5) years of age, but less than six (6) years of age, and is advanced in the primary program may be classified as other than a kindergarten student for purposes of funding under KRS 157.310 to 157.440 if the student is determined to have acquired the academic and social skills taught in kindergarten as determined by local board policy in accordance with the process established by Kentucky Board of Education administrative regulation.

Citation:
http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/krs/158-00/031.PDF

Grade-based acceleration

Example 1: Alabama
Policy Language: **(6) Placement and Service Delivery Options.** LEAs must utilize a variety of service delivery options that may include but are not limited to resource room pull-out, consultation, mentorships, advanced classes, and independent study. Gifted students' need for complexity and accelerated pacing must be accommodated for in the general education program. Accommodations may include strategies such as flexible skills grouping, cluster grouping with differentiation, curriculum compacting, subject and grade acceleration, dual enrollment, and advanced classes. Each LEA must establish and implement a procedure for considering any requests for subject or grade acceleration. The procedures must be approved by the State Department of Education and will be included in the LEA Plan for Gifted.

Citation: AAC 290-8-9-.12(6)
ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/65/Gifted%20AAC.pdf

Example 2:

Content-based acceleration

Example 1: Alabama

Policy Language: **(6) <u>Placement and Service Delivery Options</u>.** LEAs must utilize a variety of service delivery options that may include but are not limited to resource room pull-out, consultation, mentorships, advanced classes, and independent study. Gifted students' need for complexity and accelerated pacing must be accommodated for in the general education program. Accommodations may include strategies such as flexible skills grouping, cluster grouping with differentiation, curriculum compacting, subject and grade acceleration, dual enrollment, and advanced classes. Each LEA must establish and implement a procedure for considering any requests for subject or grade acceleration. The procedures must be approved by the State Department of Education and will be included in the LEA Plan for Gifted.

Citation: AAC 290-8-9-.12(6)
ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/65/Gifted%20AAC.pdf

Example 2: Ohio

Students who can exceed the grade-level indicators and benchmarks set forth in the standards must be afforded the opportunity and be encouraged to do so. Students who are gifted may require special services or activities in order to fully develop their intellectual, creative, artistic and academic capabilities or to excel in a specific content area. Again, the point of departure is the standards-based curriculum… Sections (D),(E), and (F) of OAC 3301-35-06 specify that instruction for students in grades K-12 shall be provided in curricular areas identified in sections 3301.07, 3313.60, 3313.602, and 3313.90 of the Revised Code that are "*appropriate for the student's age and ability level*… and that reflect the mission and strategic plan of the district and school."

Accelerated Placement

a) The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual subject areas.

   i) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.

   ii) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within 30 days of receiving the

request from the parent or legal guardian. If the student will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

b) At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

Citation: Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners

Dual enrollment

Example 1: Arkansas
Policy Language:
4.00 Enrollment Guidelines for Students Who Have Completed the Eighth Grade
4.01 Any student who is enrolled in grades 9-12 in an Arkansas public school shall be eligible to enroll in a publicly supported community college, technical college or four-year college or university in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the college or university.
4.02 Any public school student in grades 9-12 who enrolls in and successfully completes a course(s) offered by such a college, technical college or university or private institution shall be entitled to receive both high school and college grades and credit (credit earned by CLEP examination may not be counted as high school credit) toward graduation, as outlined in these regulations.
4.03 Students must comply with applicable enrollment or graduation requirements of the public high school.
4.04 Three semester hours of college credit taken by a student in grades 9-12 at a publicly supported community college, technical college or four-year college or university or private institution shall be the equivalent of one-half unit of high school credit.
4.05 College credit earned at a publicly supported community college, technical college or four-year college or university or private institution by an eligible student shall be counted by the high school toward graduation, including credit earned during summer terms.
4.06 All costs of higher education courses taken for concurrent college credit are the student's responsibility.

Citation: 6-18-223. Credit for college courses.
http://arkansased.org/rules/pdf/current/op_3_a.pdf

Example 2: Ohio
Policy Language:
Sec. 3365.02. There is hereby established the post-secondary enrollment options program under which a secondary grade student who is a resident of this state may enroll at a college, on a full- or part-time basis, and complete nonsectarian courses for high school and college credit. The purpose of the program is to provide enriched education opportunities to secondary grade students that are beyond the opportunities offered by the high school in which they are enrolled.
Secondary grade students in a nonpublic school may participate in the post-secondary enrollment options program if the chief administrator of such school notifies the department of education by the first day of April prior to the school year in which the school's students will participate.
The state board of education, after consulting with the board of regents, shall adopt rules governing the program. The rules shall include:

(A) Requirements for school districts, community schools, or participating nonpublic schools to provide information about the program prior to the first day of March of each year to all students enrolled in grades eight through eleven;

(B) A requirement that a student or the student's parent inform the district board of education, the governing authority of a community school, or the nonpublic school administrator by the thirtieth day of March of the student's intent to participate in the program during the following school year. The rule shall provide that any student who fails to notify a district board, the governing authority of a community school, or the nonpublic school administrator by the required date may not participate in the program during the following school year without the written consent of the district superintendent, the governing authority of a community school, or the nonpublic school administrator.

(C) Requirements that school districts and community schools provide counseling services to students in grades eight through eleven and to their parents before the students participate in the program under this chapter to ensure that students and parents are fully aware of the possible risks and consequences of participation. Counseling information shall include without limitation:

(1) Program eligibility;

(2) The process for granting academic credits;

(3) Financial arrangements for tuition, books, materials, and fees;

(4) Criteria for any transportation aid;

(5) Available support services;

(6) Scheduling;

(7) The consequences of failing or not completing a course in which the student enrolls and the effect of the grade attained in the course being included in the student's grade point average, if applicable;

(8) The effect of program participation on the student's ability to complete the district's, community school's, or nonpublic school's graduation requirements;

(9) The academic and social responsibilities of students and parents under the program;

(10) Information about and encouragement to use the counseling services of the college in which the student intends to enroll.

(D) A requirement that the student and the student's parent sign a form, provided by the school district or school, stating that they have received the counseling required by division (C) of this section and that they understand the responsibilities they must assume in the program;

(E) The options required by section 3365.04 of the Revised Code;

(F) A requirement that a student may not enroll in any specific college course through the program if the student has taken high school courses in the same subject area as that college course and has failed to attain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent, in such completed high school courses;

(G) A requirement that a student or the student's parent will reimburse the state for the amount of state funds paid to a college for a course in which the student is enrolled under this chapter if the student does not attain a passing final grade in that course.

Sec. 3365.04. The rules adopted under section 3365.02 of the Revised Code shall provide for students to enroll in courses under either of the following options:

(A) The student may elect at the time of enrollment to receive only college credit for be responsible for payment of all tuition and the cost of all textbooks, materials, and fees associated with the course. The college shall notify the student about payment of tuition and fees in the customary manner followed by the college, and the student shall be responsible for payment of all tuition and the cost of all textbooks, materials, and fees associated with the course. If A student electing this option also shall elect, at the time of enrollment, whether to receive only college credit or high school credit and college credit for the course.

(1) The student may elect to receive only college credit for the course. Except as provided in section 3365.041 of the Revised Code, if the student successfully completes the course, the college shall award the student full credit for the course, but the board of education, community school governing authority, or nonpublic participating school shall not award the high school credit.

(2) The student may elect to receive both high school credit and college credit for the course. Except as provided in section 3365.041 of the Revised Code, if the student successfully completes the course, the college shall award the student full credit for the course and the board of education, community school governing authority, or nonpublic school shall award the student high school credit.

(B) The student may elect at the time of enrollment for each course to receive both have the college credit and high school credit reimbursed under section 3365.07 of the Revised Code. Except as provided in section 3365.041 of the Revised Code, if the student successfully completes the course, the college shall award the student full credit for the course, the board of education, community school governing authority, or nonpublic school shall award the student high school credit, and the college shall be reimbursed in accordance with section 3365.07 of the Revised Code.

When determining a school district's formula ADM under section 3317.03 of the Revised Code, the time a participant is attending courses under division (A) of this section shall be considered as time the participant is not attending or enrolled in school anywhere, and the time a participant is attending courses under division (B) of this section shall be considered as time the participant is attending or enrolled in the district's schools.

Sec. 3365.05. High school credit awarded for courses successfully completed under this chapter shall count toward the graduation requirements and subject area requirements of the school district, community school, or nonpublic school. If a course comparable to one a student completed at a college is offered by the district, community school, or nonpublic school, the board or school shall award comparable credit for the course completed at the college. If no comparable course is offered by the district, community school, or nonpublic school, the board or school shall grant an appropriate number of credits in a similar subject area to the student.

If there is a dispute between a school district board or a community school governing authority and a student regarding high school credits granted for a course, the student may appeal the board's or governing authority's decision to the state board of education. The state board's decision regarding any high school credits granted under this division section is final.

Evidence of successful completion of each course and the high school credits awarded by the district, community school, or participating nonpublic school shall be included in the student's record. The record shall indicate that the credits were earned as a

participant under this chapter and shall include the name of the college at which the credits were earned. The district board, community school governing authority, or nonpublic school shall determine whether and the manner in which the grade achieved in a course completed at a college under division (A)(2) or (B) of section 3365.04 of the Revised Code will be counted in any cumulative grade point average maintained for the student.

Sec. 3365.08. (A) A college that expects to receive or receives reimbursement under section 3365.07 of the Revised Code shall furnish to a participant all textbooks and materials directly related to a course taken by the participant under division (B) of section 3365.04 of the Revised Code. No college shall charge such participant for tuition, textbooks, materials, or other fees directly related to any such course.

(B) No student enrolled under this chapter in a course for which credit toward high school graduation is awarded shall receive direct financial aid through any state or federal program.

(C) If a school district provides transportation for resident school students in grades eleven and twelve under section 3327.01 of the Revised Code, a parent of a pupil enrolled in a course under division (A)(2) or (B) of section 3365.04 of the Revised Code may apply to the board of education for full or partial reimbursement for the necessary costs of transporting the student between the secondary school the student attends and the college in which the student is enrolled. Reimbursement may be paid solely from funds received by the district under division (D) of section 3317.022 of the Revised Code. The state board of education shall establish guidelines, based on financial need, under which a district may provide such reimbursement.

(D) If a community school provides or arranges transportation for its pupils in grades nine through twelve under section 3314.091 of the Revised Code, a parent of a pupil of the community school who is enrolled in a course under division (A)(2) or (B) of section 3365.04 of the Revised Code may apply to the governing authority of the community school for full or partial reimbursement of the necessary costs of transporting the student between the community school and the college. The governing authority may pay the reimbursement in accordance with the state board's rules adopted under division (C) of this section solely from funds paid to it under section 3314.091 of the Revised Code.

Citation: Sections 3365.02 – 3365.11 Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program

http://regents.ohio.gov/legislative/OperatingBudget/PermanentLaw/postsecondary.php

Advanced Placement opportunities

Example 1: Arkansas

Policy Language:
An act to require that each school district provide high school students with the opportunity to enroll in at least one (1) advanced placement course in the four (4) core areas of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies; and for other purposes.

Citation: *House* Bill 1154, Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Section 6-16-1204, *"Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, all school districts shall offer one College Board Advanced Placement course in each of the four core areas."* The requirement under subsection (c) of this section shall be phased in over a period of four years beginning with the 2005-2006 school year.
http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/ftproot/bills/2003s2/public/HB1154.pdf

Example 2: Florida

(1) This section may be referred to by the popular name the "Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement Act."
(6) The partnership shall:
(a) Provide teacher training and professional development to enable teachers of AP or other advanced courses to have the necessary content knowledge and instructional skills to prepare students for success on AP or other advanced course examinations and mastery of postsecondary course content.
(b) Provide to middle school teachers and administrators professional development that will enable them to educate middle school students at the level necessary to prepare the students to enter high school ready to participate in advanced courses.
(c) Provide teacher training and materials that are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards and are consistent with best theory and practice regarding multiple learning styles and research on learning, instructional strategies, instructional design, and classroom assessment. Curriculum materials must be based on current, accepted, and essential academic knowledge. Materials for prerequisite courses should, at a minimum, address the skills assessed on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).
(d) Provide assessment of individual strengths and weaknesses as related to potential success in AP or other advanced courses and readiness for college.
(e) Provide college entrance exam preparation through a variety of means that may include, but are not limited to, training teachers to provide courses at schools; training community organizations to provide courses at community centers, faith-based organizations, and businesses; and providing online courses.
(f) Consider ways to incorporate community colleges in the mission of preparing all students for postsecondary success.
(g) Provide a plan for communication and coordination of efforts with the Florida Virtual School's provision of online AP or other advanced courses.

(h) Work with school districts to identify minority and underrepresented students for participation in AP or other advanced courses.
(i) Work with school districts to provide information to students and parents that explains available opportunities for students to take AP and other advanced courses and that explains enrollment procedures that students must follow to enroll in such courses. Such information must also explain the value of such courses as they relate to:
1. Preparing the student for postsecondary level coursework.
2. Enabling the student to gain access to postsecondary education opportunities.
3. Qualifying for scholarships and other financial aid opportunities.

Citation: 1007.35 Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement.
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1007/SEC35.HTM&Title=-%3e2004-%3eCh1007-%3eSection%2035

Early high school graduation/early entrance to college.

Example 1: North Carolina

Policy Language:
Duty to encourage early entry of motivated students into four-year college programs. – The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Education Cabinet, shall work with local school administrative units, the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina, local community colleges, and private colleges and universities to (i) encourage early entry of motivated students into four-year college programs and to (ii) ensure that there are opportunities at four-year institutions for academically talented high school students to get an early start on college coursework, either at nearby institutions or through distance learning.

The State Board of Education shall also adopt policies directing school guidance counselors to make ninth grade students aware of the potential to complete high school courses required for college entry in a three-year period.

Citation: North Carolina Statute §115C-12(32**)** Powers and duties of the Board generally.
http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_115C/GS_115C-
12.html

Example 2: Florida

Policy Language:
(1) Students who enter grade 9 in the 2006-2007 school year and thereafter may select, upon receipt of each consent required by this section, one of the following three high school graduation options:
(a) Completion of the general requirements for high school graduation pursuant to s. 1003.43;
(b) Completion of a 3-year standard college preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. At least 6 of the 18 credits required for completion of this program must be received in classes that are offered pursuant to the International Baccalaureate Program, the Advanced Placement Program, dual enrollment, Advanced International Certificate of Education, or specifically listed or identified by the Department of Education as rigorous pursuant to s. 1009.531(3). The 18 credits required for completion of this program shall be primary requirements and shall be distributed as follows:
1. Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature;
2. Three credits in mathematics at the Algebra I level or higher from the list of courses that qualify for state university admission;
3. Three credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component;

4. Three credits in social sciences, which must include one credit in American history, one credit in world history, one-half credit in American government, and one-half credit in economics;
5. Two credits in the same second language unless the student is a native speaker of or can otherwise demonstrate competency in a language other than English. If the student demonstrates competency in another language, the student may replace the language requirement with two credits in other academic courses; and
6. Three credits in electives; or
(c) Completion of a 3-year career preparatory program requiring successful completion of a minimum of 18 academic credits in grades 9 through 12. The 18 credits shall be primary requirements and shall be distributed as follows:
1. Four credits in English, with major concentration in composition and literature;
2. Three credits in mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I;
3. Three credits in natural science, two of which must have a laboratory component;
4. Three credits in social sciences, which must include one credit in American history, one credit in world history, one-half credit in American government, and one-half credit in economics;
5. Three credits in a single vocational or career education program, three credits in career and technical certificate dual enrollment courses, or five credits in vocational or career education courses; and
6. Two credits in electives unless five credits are earned pursuant to subparagraph 5.

Any student who selected an accelerated graduation program before July 1, 2004, may continue that program, and all statutory program requirements that were applicable when the student made the program choice shall remain applicable to the student as long as the student continues that program.
(2) Prior to selecting a program described in paragraph (1)(b) or paragraph (1)(c), a student and the student's parent must meet with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of each program option, and the student must also receive the written consent of the student's parent.
(3) Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, each district school board shall provide each student in grades 6 through 9 and their parents with information concerning the 3-year and 4-year high school graduation options listed in subsection (1), including the respective curriculum requirements for those options, so that the students and their parents may select the program that best fits their needs. The information must include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.
(4) Selection of one of the graduation options listed in subsection (1) must be completed by the student prior to the end of grade 9 and is exclusively up to the student and parent, subject to the requirements in subsection (2). Each district school board shall establish policies for extending this deadline to the end of a student's first semester of grade 10 for a student who entered a Florida public school after grade 9 upon transfer from a private school or another state or who was prevented from choosing a graduation option due to illness during grade 9. If the student and parent fail to select a graduation option, the student shall be considered to have selected the general requirements for high school graduation pursuant to paragraph (1)(a).

(5) District school boards may not establish requirements for accelerated 3-year high school graduation options in excess of the requirements in paragraphs (1)(b) and (c).
(6) Students pursuing accelerated 3-year high school graduation options pursuant to paragraph (1)(b) or paragraph (1)(c) are required to:
(a) Earn passing scores on the FCAT as defined in s. 1008.22(3)(c) or scores on a standardized test that are concordant with passing scores on the FCAT as defined in s. 1008.22(10).
(b)1. Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the college preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option pursuant to paragraph (1)(b); or
2. Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option pursuant to paragraph (1)(c).
(c) Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 3.0 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the college preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option pursuant to paragraph (1)(b).
(d) Receive a weighted or unweighted grade that earns at least 2.0 points, or its equivalent, to earn course credit toward the 18 credits required for the career preparatory accelerated 3-year high school graduation option pursuant to paragraph (1)(c).

Weighted grades referred to in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) shall be applied to those courses specifically listed or identified by the department as rigorous pursuant to s. 1009.531(3) or weighted by the district school board for class ranking purposes.
(7) If, at the end of grade 10, a student is not on track to meet the credit, assessment, or grade-point-average requirements of the accelerated graduation option selected, the school shall notify the student and parent of the following:
(a) The requirements that the student is not currently meeting.
(b) The specific performance necessary in grade 11 for the student to meet the accelerated graduation requirements.
(c) The right of the student to change to the 4-year program set forth in s. 1003.43.
(8) A student who selected one of the accelerated 3-year graduation options shall automatically move to the 4-year program set forth in s. 1003.43 if the student:
(a) Exercises his or her right to change to the 4-year program;
(b) Fails to earn 5 credits by the end of grade 9 or fails to earn 11 credits by the end of grade 10;
(c) Does not achieve a score of 3 or higher on the grade 10 FCAT Writing assessment; or
(d) By the end of grade 11 does not meet the requirements of subsections (1) and (6).
(9) A student who meets all requirements prescribed in subsections (1) and (6) shall be awarded a standard diploma in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

Citation: 1003.429 Accelerated high school graduation options.
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=Ch1003/ch1003.htm

Sample Policy Language Relating to Guidelines for Developing an Academic Acceleration Policy

Regulations that specify desirable program options for high ability learners

Example 1: Washington

Policy Language:
WAC 392-170-037**:** Learning opportunities shown by research and practice to be especially effective with highly capable students include, but are not limited to:

(1) Accelerated learning opportunities;

(2) Grouping arrangements that provide intellectual and interest peer group interactions;

(3) Cooperative agreements between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education providing for concurrent enrollment, dual credit, and other advance and/or postsecondary options;

(4) Programs designed to coordinate, combine and/or share resources, people and facilities within a district or building in order to maximize access to and utilization of available resources for supporting students' learning;

(5) Mentorships and career exploration opportunities.

WAC 392-170-078: Education program plans for each identified highly capable student or plans for a group of students with similar academic abilities shall be developed based on the results of the assessed academic need of that student or group of students. A variety of appropriate program services shall be made available. Once services are started, a continuum of services shall be provided and may include kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Citation: Washington Administrative Code (WAC)
http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.185
http://www1.leg.wa.gov/documents/Laws_bkup/WAC/WAC%20392%20%20TITLE/WAC%20392
%20-170%20%20CHAPTER/WAC%20392%20-170%20-037.HTM
and
http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=392-170&full=true

Example 2: Alabama

Policy Language:

Placement and Service Delivery Options. LEAs must utilize a variety of service delivery options that may include but are not limited to resource room pull-out, consultation, mentorships, advanced classes, and independent study. Gifted students' need for complexity and accelerated pacing must be accommodated for in the general education program. Accommodations may include strategies such as flexible skills grouping, cluster grouping with differentiation, curriculum compacting, subject and grade acceleration, dual enrollment, and advanced classes. Each LEA must establish and implement a procedure for considering any requests for subject or grade acceleration. The procedures must be approved by the State Department of Education and will be included in the LEA Plan for Gifted.

(a) Modes of service delivery may vary by grade and/or grade level cluster but must be consistent from school to school. In addition, services must be comparable in quality and duration from school to school within an LEA.

(b) Modes of service delivery to each grade level or grade level cluster or the intent to utilize general education staff to teach advanced classes must be approved by the State Department of Education in the *LEA Plan for Gifted.* In the event that general education staff are utilized, they must be knowledgeable of gifted learners, trained in differentiation, and demonstrate a willingness to address the needs of diverse learners. Exceptions to the modes of service delivery for any grade or grade level cluster require prior state approval.

(c) The recommended modes for services are as follows:

1. Grades K-2—regular classroom accommodations with consultation from a gifted specialist as needed. The general education teacher should be knowledgeable of gifted learners, trained in differentiation, and demonstrate a willingness to address the needs of diverse learners.
2. Grades 3-5/6—resource room pull-out for 3-5 hours a week,
3. Grades 6/7-8—pull-out services including electives and enrichment clusters, and/or, advanced classes in the core content areas.
4. Grades 9-12—advanced classes (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate), electives, dual enrollment (where available), career/college counseling, mentorships, seminars, and independent studies.

Citation: AAC 290-8-9-.12(6)
ftp://ftp.alsde.edu/documents/65/Gifted%20AAC.pdf

Regulations that reference special populations of gifted students

Example 1: Maine (addresses highly gifted students)

Policy Language:
104.04 ~ General Principles for Gifted and Talented Educational Programs
Gifted and talented programs in the State are to be based on the following educational principles:…

5. Highly gifted and talented children may need further modifications to their educational programs; therefore, appropriate adjustments or alternatives to their gifted and talented programs must be made.

Citation: Chapter 104 Educational Programs for Gifted and Talented Children
http://www.megat.org/Chapter%20104.html

Example 2: Pennsylvania (addresses twice exceptional students)

Policy Language:
(a) Nothing in this chapter [which outlines guidelines for gifted education] is intended to reduce the protections afforded to students who are eligible for special education as provided for under Chapters 14 and 342 (relating to special education services and programs) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400--1485).
(b) If a student is determined to be both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in Chapter 14 and 342 shall take precedence. For these students identified with dual exceptionalities, the needs established under gifted status in this chapter shall be fully addressed in the procedures required in Chapters 14 and 342.
(c) For students who are gifted and eligible for special education, it is not necessary for school districts to conduct separate screening and evaluations, develop separate IEPs, or use separate procedural safeguards processes to provide for a student's needs as both a gifted and an eligible student.

Citation: Title 22, Chapter 16.7 Special education
http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol30/30-50/2124.html

Regulation that states a precise route to proficiency promotion and cites the curriculum extensions and acceleration options that could be used to accommodate learners who have demonstrated proficiency (A Guide to State Policies in Gifted Education, 2007)

Example 1: Oklahoma

Policy Language:
I. Proficiency Based Promotion
A. Upon the request of a student, parent, guardian, or educator, a student will be given the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in one or more areas of the core curriculum.

1. Proficiency will be demonstrated by assessment or evaluation appropriate to the curriculum area, for example: portfolios, criterion-referenced test, thesis, project, product or performance. Proficiency in all laboratory sciences will require that students are able to perform relevant laboratory techniques.
2. Students shall have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in the core areas as identified in 70 O.S. 11-103.6:
    a. Social Studies
    b. Language Arts
    c. The Arts
    d. Languages
    e. Mathematics
    f. Science
3. Proficiency for advancing to the next level will be demonstrated by a score of 90 percent or comparable performance on an assessment or demonstration.
4. The opportunity for proficiency assessment will be provided at least once each school year for the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years. Beginning with the 1995-96 year, the opportunity will be provided at least twice each year.
5. Qualifying students are those who are legally enrolled in the local school district.
6. The district may not require registration for the proficiency assessment more than one month in advance of the assessment date.
7. Students will be allowed to take the proficiency assessments in multiple subject areas.
8. Students not demonstrating proficiency will be allowed to try again during the next assessment period.
9. Exceptions to standard assessment may be approved by a local district for those students with disabling conditions.

B. Students demonstrating proficiency in a core curriculum area will be given credit for their learning and will be given the opportunity to advance to the next level of study in the appropriate curriculum area.

1. The school will confer with parents in making such promotion/acceleration decisions. Such factors as social and mental growth should be considered.
2. If the parent or guardian requests promotion/acceleration contrary to the recommendation of school personnel, the parent or guardian shall sign a written statement to that effect. This statement shall be included in the permanent record of the

3. Failure to demonstrate proficiency will not be noted on the transcript.
4. Students must progress through a curriculum area in a sequential manner. Elementary, middle level, or high school students may demonstrate proficiency and advance to the next level in a curriculum area.
5. If proficiency is demonstrated in a 9-12 curriculum area, appropriate notation will be
placed on the high school transcript. The unit shall count toward meeting the requirements for the high school diploma.
6. Units earned through proficiency assessment will be transferable with students among school districts within the state of Oklahoma.

C. Proficiency assessment will measure mastery of the priority academic student skills in the same way that curriculum and instruction are focused on the priority academic student skills. In other words, assessment will be aligned with curriculum and instruction.

D. Options for accommodating student needs for advancement after they have demonstrated proficiency may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Individualized instruction
2. Correspondence courses
3. Independent study
4. Concurrent enrollment
5. Cross-grade grouping
6. Cluster grouping
7. Grade/course advancement
8. Individualized education programs

E. Each school district will disseminate materials explaining the opportunities of Proficiency Based Promotion to students and parents in the district each year. *Priority Student Skills (PASS)* and type of assessment or evaluation for each core curriculum area will be made available upon request.

II. Appropriate notation for core curriculum area completed

Appropriate notation will be made for elementary, middle level or high school level students satisfactorily completing a 9-12 high school curriculum area. Completion may be recorded with a grade or pass. This unit will count toward meeting the requirements for the high school diploma.

Citation: Oklahoma State Department of Education, Regulations for Proficiency Based Promotion.
http://title3.sde.state.ok.us/gifted/pbp.htm

Regulation that specifies the criteria for students to be awarded credit based on demonstrated proficiency and the procedures for placing the student in an accelerated environment.

Example 2: Texas

Policy Language:
§74.24. Credit by Examination.

(a) General provisions.

(1) A school district must provide at least three days between January 1 and June 30 and three days between July 1 and December 31 annually when examinations for acceleration for each primary school grade level and for credit for secondary school academic subjects required under Texas Education Code, §28.023, shall be administered in Grades 1-12. The days do not need to be consecutive but must be designed to meet the needs of all students. The dates must be publicized in the community.

(2) A school district shall not charge for an exam for acceleration for each primary school grade level or for credit for secondary school academic subjects. If a parent requests an alternative examination, the district may administer and recognize results of a test purchased by the parent or student from Texas Tech University or The University of Texas at Austin.

(3) A school district must have the approval of the district board of trustees to develop its own tests or to purchase examinations that thoroughly test the essential knowledge and skills in the applicable grade level or subject area.

(4) A school district may allow a student to accelerate at a time other than one required in paragraph (1) of this subsection by developing a cost-free option approved by the district board of trustees that allows students to demonstrate academic achievement or proficiency in a subject or grade level.

(b) Assessment for acceleration in kindergarten through Grade 5.

(1) A school district must develop procedures for kindergarten acceleration that are approved by the district board of trustees.

(2) A student in any of Grades 1-5 must be accelerated one grade if he or she meets the following requirements:

(A) the student scores 90% on a criterion-referenced test for the grade level he or she wants to skip in each of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;

(B) a school district representative recommends that the student be accelerated; and

(C) the student's parent or guardian gives written approval for the acceleration.

(c) Assessment for course credit in Grades 6-12.

(1) A student in any of Grades 6-12 must be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she has had no prior instruction if the student scores 90% on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable course.

(2) If a student is given credit in a subject on the basis of an examination, the school district must enter the examination score on the student's transcript.

(3) In accordance with local school district policy, a student in any of Grades 6-12 may be given credit for an academic subject in which he or she had some prior instruction, if the student scores 70% on a criterion-referenced test for the applicable course.

Citation: 19 TAC §74.24, Credit by Examination
http://cistexas.org/sboe/schedule/2007/february/instruction/attachment/03_cbe_a2.pdf

Appendix E: Example referral forms from the Ohio Department of Education

Model Written Acceleration Plans and Templates

The Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners calls for the creation of "written acceleration plans" for accelerated students. Below are sample acceleration plans:

* Whole-grade acceleration (PDF)
* Subject acceleration in math (PDF)
* Subject acceleration in science (PDF)
* Early high school graduation (PDF)